



WASHINGTON STATE
GAMBLING COMMISSION

Field Operation Rule Interpretation

Title: *RCW 9.46.0277 "Raffle"*

Summary:

Drawings are considered raffles when tickets are sold, winners are chosen from the random drawing of sold tickets, and prizes are awarded. The dollar value of the prize or the end recipient of a raffle prize does not impact this definition.

Text:

A non-profit organization wanted to conduct a raffle by selling pre-numbered tickets, conducting a drawing, and awarding cash prizes. However the prize money would not be awarded to the winning ticket holder(s) but would be donated, in their name, to a pre-designated charity of their choice. The organization believes this scheme should not be considered a raffle because the winning ticket holders do not receive anything of monetary value.

RCW 9.46.0277 "Raffle" means, among other things, a game in which tickets bearing an individual number are sold and in which a prize or prizes are awarded on the basis of a drawing from the tickets.

This scheme has all three elements listed above; they are selling tickets, conducting a drawing, and awarding prizes. The definition above does not mention the value of the prize or who has to receive the prize. The definition merely states the prize is determined based on the drawing from the tickets. Further, the primary purpose for conducting this activity is to generate funds for the sponsoring organization.

In addition, RCW 9.46.0237 "Gambling" means, among other things, as staking or risking something of value upon the outcome of a contest of chance for an agreement of understanding that a person or someone else will receive something of value in the event of a certain outcome. Based on the definition of gambling this scheme has participants risking money (the purchase of tickets), upon the outcome of a contest of chance (drawing), upon an agreement that a person or someone else will receive something of value (the chosen non-profit organization receives prize money, the winning ticket holder receives a promise to be named as the donor).

This scheme has all the elements of gambling and meets the definition of a raffle and should be accountable to all applicable raffle rules and regulations.

Approved: Cally Cass-Healy, Assistant Director
Washington State Gambling Commission

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